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sports state + Big Sky

MIKE MONTGOMERY NAMED HEAD BASKETBALL
COACH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA
rosenthal/jg

MISSOULA--

Mike Montgomery, assistant basketball coach at the University of Montana for the past two seasons, was named head basketball coach Friday by UM Men's Athletic Director Harley Lewis. The announcement came at an afternoon news conference in Missoula.

Montgomery, 31, replaces Jim Brandenburg who resigned the position Friday morning to accept the head basketball position at the University of Wyoming.

Brandenburg had been an assistant coach at Montana for six seasons and replaced Jud Heathcote as head coach in 1976 when Heathcote was named head basketball coach at Michigan State University. Brandenburg led the Grizzlies for two seasons and posted a 39-16 two-year record. Last season's club finished with a 21-8 overall record and won the regular season Big Sky Conference title with a 12-2 mark. The Grizzlies beat Boise State in the first round of the conference playoffs, but lost to Weber State in the championship game. Brandenburg was named co-coach of the year in the league.

Montgomery was born in Long Beach, Calif., and attended Millikan High School there. He continued his education at Long Beach State University and received a B.A. in Physical Education in 1968. He earned his master's degree in Physical Education from Colorado State University.

Montgomery served as assistant coach at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, Colorado State University, the Citadel and the University of Florida. Before coming to UM in 1976, he was assistant coach at Boise State University for three years.

Because of the consolidation of the men's and women's athletic programs, instituted at Montana, Montgomery's position is a newly-created one. He will be administratively in charge of both the men's and women's programs. Before, the men and women each had separate head coaches.

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Also, under the new administrative reorganization of the combined programs, there will be open recruitment for two new full-time coaching positions for both men's and women's programs.

Montgomery said, "I am very excited about accepting this position and am committed to continuing our outstanding men's basketball program at Montana. With the new organization in effect, I think we can achieve excellence in the women's program in the near future. I feel very strongly that both men's and women's basketball can continue to grow and excell at the University of Montana."

"We are sorry to lose Jim Brandenburg," Harley Lewis said, "but we realize that he has a fine opportunity at the University of Wyoming. I'm convinced our basketball program is in capable hands with Mike Montgomery. He has made a great impact on our successful basketball program in two years as an assistant coach and I know he'll continue this success with both the men's and women's programs. We are very fortunate to have a man of Mike's ability and experience to lead this program."

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